

Abstract

An automated meter reading system is provided. The system includes a host server interfaced to a plurality of nodes where each node communicates with a number of utility meters. The system selects a group of noninterfering nodes and uses
5 an RF broadcast from the host server to initiate the reading of meters and the uploading of meter data provided by those meters to the nodes and, ultimately, to the host server. The system also has a number of gateways that communicate with a plurality of nodes, grouped to form sets of noninterfering gateways. In this embodiment, the system selects a set of noninterfering gateways and uses an RF
10 broadcast from the host server to initiate the reading of meters and the uploading of meter data provided by those meters to the nodes and, ultimately, through the gateways to the host server. A method for using an outbound RF channel to automatically read meters is also provided.